

would probably have been quite ready to treat with that gentleman, had he been able to offer him the terms decided on before he had received encouragement elsewhere.

THE PERSONAL CHARGES.

We are bound to state that there is nothing whatever to touch Mr. Chapleau personally, and that Mr. Dansereau has positively denied on oath what Mr. Prentice has affirmed. The amendment proposed by Mr. Joly and Mr. Langelier avoids all notice of the personal charges, which we think is sufficient proof that they were entirely disbelieved. The majority of the Committee have taken the most unfavorable view of Mr. Prentice's conduct. Had that gentleman abstained from making personal charges, when irritated by his disappointment, his position would have been simply that he had been disappointed in a good operation which he had been laboring to effect. As it is, he has committed himself to an injurious attack on the character of the leader of the Government without being able to substantiate it.

SMALL ACCOUNTS AGAIN.

The public conscience still needs quickening in the matter of paying small accounts—and we refer now not to newspaper dues in particular, though as to these we might indeed speak feelingly, but more especially to the bills of tradespeople for trifling sums. There is of course a certain percentage of debtors who deliberately neglect the discharge of trifling dues and incur debt as opportunity is found with no intention of paying at any time. Of these it is useless to write; they are rogues by election, and would only laugh at the innocency which mistook them for anything else. The only arguments having any weight with such are the pains and penalties of the law.

But, let it be gladly said, this class forms but an insignificant portion of the debtor community. There is another and a much larger class undoubtedly free from any intention to defraud or injure, who yet advisedly neglect bills for no other discoverable reason than that they are small in amount. Collectors not infrequently are met with an answer of this kind "what is the matter with your firm? Can't you afford to wait for a little amount like this? I can't be bothered with it now; come some time when I'm not busy." This reply exposes the whole difficulty—small bills are thought to be a bother, and their payment a matter of no special concern that can be attended to any time.

Small bills are a bother—but only when

they are not paid promptly. Small bills are not a matter of no special concern, but a matter of business entitled to despatch in due time just as much as affairs of the largest importance. If those who are in the habit of turning a deaf ear to collectors until their very importunity arrests attention and secures payment would only put themselves in the creditor's place (and as a rule their own experience will permit them to do this) they would be brought to realize more fully than in any other way the doubly aggravating character of the offence of non-payment of small bills—doubly aggravating because creditor and debtor are alike offended. The creditor resents importunity; the debtor resists injustice; and a trifling matter that neither would be willing to quarrel about leads to the severance of an otherwise satisfactory business relationship. Many business men have a fixed day of the week or month on which all bills presented prior thereto will be paid. Is there any good reason why such a regulation should not be adopted universally?

MIXING AND MUDDLING THE QUEBEC LOAN.

The anonymous writer in the *Witness* over the signature "Rusticus" may be satisfied with preserving his own incognito without meddling with the authorship of articles in this journal regarding which he has no information whatever. For every article which appears in our columns the Proprietor and Editor is responsible, and it is mere impertinence to refer to an imaginary financial Editor, who has no existence. As for the criticism on our notice of the Quebec Loan we must repeat that "Rusticus" does not comprehend the subject. Our calculation was based on the current rate of exchange on London at Paris at the latest date in our possession, whereas "Rusticus" has made his calculation at par. The error is his and not ours. His other criticisms are undeserving of notice. We never pretended to give the true value of the loan at any specific time, but we stated that £4,000 commission would have to be paid "at the maturity of the loan," and the commission on the interest was also stated with sufficient clearness to be payable periodically. On what is really the main point, and which led to our original notice of the subject, viz., the difference between the real value of funds in Paris and London, all that "Rusticus" can say is: "I can scarcely believe that the Government will be so foolish as to allow it, though the wording of the contract would seem to indicate such folly."

We need not add another word. "Rusticus" believes, and appears to desire, that the Government of Quebec should repudiate an agreement deliberately entered into, because it was foolish. We acknowledge that we would much prefer incurring the loss to the repudiation of a contract, but then the *Witness* professes to inculcate a high tone of morality, and is, we presume, a better judge than we can pretend to be of what is strictly moral.

THE QUEBEC LEGISLATURE.

The Lieutenant Governor closed on Saturday last the session of the Quebec Legislature, after having assented to 112 bills, the greater number, of course, private. The most important public act was that respecting the Lower Canada Consolidated Municipal Loan Fund, which the *Montreal Gazette* estimates as likely to yield \$250,000 annually. We fear that this is much too sanguine an estimate. The sale of the railway is still in contemplation, but it will be difficult to find any mode of disposing of it that will not expose the minister to personal charges. The new license act will, in the opinion of the *Gazette*, give \$100,000, and the reductions in salaries \$50,000. A valuable reform has been adopted by which the Provincial Treasury will be relieved of a portion of the cost of maintaining institutions for the insane. If the result of the session should be an improvement in our financial position of \$880,000 annually, the administration will certainly be entitled to credit. We own that we have not the same confidence as the *Gazette* that his anticipations will be realized, and especially do we distrust the realization of the Municipal Loan Fund Asset, regarding which Alderman Nelson made some startling disclosures with reference to payments on account by Montreal. We are glad to notice that the future sessions are to be held during the winter months.

THE HARVEST YIELD.

It may be estimated that the yield of the present season will be nearly, if not quite, equal to that of 1879. Winter wheat in the western peninsula of Ontario has been, with a few local exceptions, a particularly good crop, and, notwithstanding the showery weather, has been housed in good condition, and with little or no loss. The kernel is remarkably plump. Oats promise an abundant yield, and peas and all green crops are scarcely behind. The potato plants are again visited by the pestiferous Colorado beetle, but not to the extent of former years, and a good crop is anticipated. In the midland and eastern sections of Ontario spring wheat has been slightly affected by rust, and barley has been somewhat discolored by the unfavorable showery weather; but on the whole the yield promises satisfactory results.